



ECUMEST Association

**Annual Report
2003**

Introduction

Our mission

The ECUMEST Association aims to respond to the need of encouraging managerial autonomy, the responsibility in designing and implementing cultural policies and in mediating the artistic and cultural production, as well as creativity and creative artists. Its action strives to promote a continuous reflection on the alternatives available and the decisions taken by the politicians in the cultural field, as well as to intermediate a large dissemination of European experience and values in the cultural arena.

The long-term objectives of the ECUMEST Association are to set up a regional pole (in Eastern Europe) for analysis and expertise in the field of cultural policy and to initiate pilot programmes promoting and facilitating the cooperation of young artists and cultural operators throughout the region, in response to an existing need of dialogue and mobility at European level.

Whom we address

ECUMEST Association functions as an interface organisation, offering professional accompanying to and mediating three main types of cultural actors:

- the creative sector, and particularly young artists;
- mediators, within which cultural magazines are at present the priority target;
- political decision-makers and cultural administrators and managers at all levels.

ECUMEST Association's activities in 2003

Following its set objectives as well as its expertise, ECUMEST Association's activity focused in the year 2003 on its four main directions, now enlarged:

- **cultural policy:** continuing and developing the *Policies for Culture* programme, initiated and developed in partnership with the European Cultural Foundation (Amsterdam); continuing and developing the ARCult programme – the Romanian Cultural Agency;
- **professional development in the areas of cultural management and cultural policies:** continuing the partnership with the University of Arts in Belgrade (UAB) and initiating a partnership with the French Embassy and the French Institute in Bucharest in view of developing the regional postgraduate programme in “Management and Cultural Policies in the Balkans”; developing punctual training activities;
- **support to cultural press:** designing and launching several larger activities of the “Press Stress Group” (working group putting together Romanian magazines *Dilema*, *Observator Cultural* and *Litere, arte, idei*).
- **supporting networking and the mobility of young artists and cultural mediators,** by participating in the encounters of various European cultural networks, as well as in the development of a new network – Balkan Express, and promoting the participation of young artists and managers in these networks.

In the framework of these fields of activity and expertise and beyond the projects initiated or in which it is associated as partner, ECUMEST Association has carried on a series of commissioned research and consultancy projects, which will be presented distinctively further on.

• Cultural policy



The Policies for Culture programme

Launched in 2000 and developed in partnership by the European Cultural Foundation (Amsterdam) and the ECUMEST Association (Bucharest), the regional programme *Policies for Culture* has registered in 2003 a larger development, succeeding in starting and/or supporting projects in the entire South East European region, as well as in the Republic of Moldova.

Below we will shortly present the activities developed within the programme in 2003:

□ *Continuing local action*

The principles of the *Policies for Culture* are implemented at local level mainly through the means of **action projects**. Action projects are the result of local initiatives proposed by individuals and organisations from the cultural field, as responses to calls for projects launched by *Policies for Culture*.

The year 2003 has marked the continuation and the finalization of several projects launched in 2002, but mostly launching an extensive call for projects in all the countries of the region (with the exception of Bulgaria and Romania), following which eight new projects were supported in all these countries. The local coordinators of the *Policies for Culture* have monitored these projects and offered consultancy and support in their development.

In this way, the projects continued in 2003 were:

- The Romanian Cultural Agency, Bucharest, Romania, set up in 2002;
- Towards a Cultural Strategy for the Arad County, Romania, 2002;
- Participative Policy Making: Cultural Strategy of the City of Zagreb, Croatia, 2002;
- CLUBTURE – Policy Forum: Towards a New Position of the independent, not-for-profit and non-institutional cultural sector in Policy-Making, Croatia 2002;
- Cooperation and Dialogue in Building Effective Local Cultural Policies: Sombor-Užice - Kragujevac - Šabac, Serbia, 2002;
- Cultural Policy Making in Macedonia – Empowering the Independent Cultural Sector in Prilep, Macedonia, 2002-2003;
- Technological Park Culture II, Sofia, Bulgaria 2002-2003.

The projects supported following the regional call were:

- Local Cultural Strategy Development Prilep – follow-up, Macedonia, 2003-2004
- Local Cultural Strategy Development Zlatibor County, Serbia, 2003-2004
- Local Cultural Strategy Development, Rijeka, Croatia, 2003-2004
- Local Cultural Strategy Development, Prijedor, Bosnia & Herzegovina, 2003-2004
- Local Cultural Strategy Development Obrenovac (Belgrade), Serbia, 2003-2004
- Platform for a New Impact of Culture in Montenegro, 2003-2004
- Policies for Theatre & Film Production in Albania, 2003
- New Funding for Culture, Moldova, 2003-2004.

Still in the framework of Policies for Culture, but with the status of an associated project, the project “Determining a Strategy of Cultural Development for a Multiethnic Society – Macedonia Policy Debate Centre (follow-up)” was developed with the direct support of the European Cultural Foundation in Amsterdam.

□ *Workshops*

Local Cultural Strategy Development in South East Europe. Building on practice and experience

A major Policies for Culture international event on this theme took place in Bucharest on 8-10 May 2003. The workshop was aimed at consolidating the methodologies and practices of the several Policies for Culture action projects on local cultural policy/strategy development, which have been taking place in cities and counties throughout South East Europe, and to translate the experience and results of the projects into theoretical models, backed by the exemplary force of practical action. The workshop was organised in close cooperation with the Central European Initiative (CEI) and the Romanian Ministry of Culture and Religious Affairs. The workshop dossier and report are available for consultation on the Policies for Culture website.

□ *Developing cooperation with the media in SEE*

At the end of 2002, in a step towards extending the partnership with media throughout the region, *Policies for Culture* initiated **a cooperation with eleven publications (daily newspapers and cultural magazines) from countries in South East Europe** implemented along 2003. The aim of this cooperation was to bring the subject of cultural policy to the attention of a wider audience in all of these countries and, at the same time, to establish a closer partnership with key representatives of the media sector in South East Europe. Each of these publications (namely *Kultura* and *Kapital* – Bulgaria, *Danas* – Serbia, *Vijesti* – Montenegro, *Margina* – Macedonia, *Zarez* – Croatia, *Contrafort* – Republic of Moldova, *Observator Cultural*, *LAI* and *Cotidianul* – Romania) have published thematic dossiers on cultural policies, proposing their own selection of articles from those already published in the framework of *Policies for Culture*. A similar dossier will be published in Albanian magazine *Perpjekja* at the beginning of 2004.

□ *Cultural policy research*

Launched at the end of 2002, the larger research initiative represented by several methodological papers commissioned to several highly renowned cultural policy professionals in South East Europe was finalized in 2003. These papers, designed as comparative, pan-European analyses in the priority fields identified by *Policies for Culture*, have been widely disseminated, being available online at the programme's website (www.policiesforculture.org) and representing a point of departure in research activities of PfC.

Please find below the list of these papers:

- Andrea Zlatar (HR): **The Role of the Media as an Instrument of Cultural Policy**
- Nada Svob-Djokic & Nina Obuljen (HR): **Comparative cultural policy issues related to cultural diversity in South East Europe**
- Vjeran Katunaric (HR): **Decentralisation in SEE - Objectives, Instruments, Practices**
- Lidia Varbanova (BG): **Financing Cultural Practices in South East Europe**
- Dan C. Mihăilescu (RO): **Romania – Passing from a ‘Culture of Darkness’ to a ‘Daylight Culture’**
- Borka Pavicevic (SR): **CULTURE IS THE CULTURE OF ‘OTHERS’. Mapping issues to be addressed concerning the role of culture in the reconstruction of the civil society texture in South East Europe**

□ *Publications*

In 2003 the publishing and the wide distribution of the online publication *Policies for Culture Journal* has continued. Three thematic issues were thus published:

- Spring 2003: **Media and Cultural Policy in SEE**
- Summer 2003: **Local Cultural Strategy Development in SEE**
- Winter 2003: **Artists in SEE Cultural Policy Making**

The *Info Bulletin* - an online cultural policy information service has also continued to appear, its last issue being published in October.

In 2003 the development of a broad publication of the programme, in collaboration with Boekman Foundation in Amsterdam, having as editors Corina Suteu and Hanneloes Weeda, designed to present the experience of the programme, its action, but also the reflection on the main issues approached by *Policies for Culture* in its almost four years of activity. This publication will be available in September 2004.

Still in the chapter dedicated to publications it is added the development of a **new case study** based on the action project “Cultural Strategy of the Timis County”, which will be finalized and distributed during Fall 2004.

In the section dedicated to communication instruments, the building of a new website of the programme is of great interest, since this website is intended to represent a real online resource centre in the field of cultural policies in SEE. The new website will be launched during April 2004.



ARCult – the Romanian Cultural Agency

The ARCult (Romanian Cultural Agency) programme was launched by the ECUMEST Association in 2002, as an action project in the framework of the *Policies for Culture* programme, receiving subsequent support from the *Arts & Culture Network Program* of the Open Society Institute in Budapest. The programme aims to provide the Romanian cultural sector with specialized assistance (information, consultancy, research) in the field of cultural policy and legislation, to facilitate communication and cooperation within the cultural sector and to contribute to the general improvement of the framework in which the sector functions.

The development of the Romanian Cultural Agency (ARCult) as a resource centre which shall stimulate structural changes on the long term in the field of cultural policies in Romania as well as in the region has taken the form of three main complementary activities, implemented in parallel, respectively:

- ❑ **Information provided to the cultural sector:** This information is provided through the dissemination of INFO ARCult messages to an important (and permanently growing) distribution list from throughout the country, mainly addressed to cultural operators, but also representatives of each category of cultural actors. This information service will be continuously developed in order to disseminate useful news, but also to analyse different evolutions in the field of cultural policies.
- ❑ **Analysing and influencing the cultural policies** by producing an action research, by elaborating **recommendations of public policy** and the debate generated in view of improving the situation in the field. The first study made in the framework of ARCult has focused on the “**Access of cultural NGOs to public funding in Romania**”, and was presented and discussed in a round table which took place in March 2003.
- ❑ **Development of the legislative online database addressing the cultural field in Romania.** Meeting the need of information in the field of legislation, which influences directly or indirectly, the cultural field, ARCult had the initiative of building an online database and the realization of several legal guides on different fields of interest (online database with free consultation; guides available also in English for a wider, regional access). Both the database and the legal guides have been designed and prepared in 2002 and 2003 and will be available for consultation starting with 2004, at the address www.ecumest.ro/lege.php.
- ❑ **Consultancy**
In 2003, the ECUMEST Association has also provided consultancy in the field of cultural policies, on legislative issues, project-development, cultural cooperation etc. One of the most important activities is developed at the commissioning of the Royal Dutch Embassy in Bucharest, presented in the chapter dedicated to commissioned projects.

• Professional development

In this direction of activity, in 2003 the following projects have been developed:

- ❑ **Collaboration in the framework of the regional Postgraduate programme in Cultural Management and Cultural Policies in the Balkans.** The French Institute in Bucharest, ECUMEST Association and the University of Arts in Belgrade launched the programme of Regional Postgraduate Studies in Cultural Management and Cultural Policy in the Balkans (based in Belgrade). The postgraduate programme, which was launched in the autumn of 2003, is organised by the University of Arts in Belgrade, in partnership with the French universities Lyon II, the Institute of Political Studies in Grenoble and Paris IX Dauphine. The programme is supported by the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, with the participation of UNESCO and the Central European Initiative. The Embassy of France in Bucharest, The French Institute in Bucharest and ECUMEST Association are the local partners of the programme in Romania. ECUMEST has participated in the promotion of the programme and the selection of the Romanian participants.
- ❑ **Organising the residence of students in cultural management in Bucharest** Bucharest was hosting, between 21-25 April 2003, the residence of the students of the graduate program of “Studies in interculturalism, art management and mediation in the Balkans”, initiated by the University of Arts in Belgrade, accompanied by the Rector of the University, Mrs. Milena Dragicevic-Sesic. The residence was organised by the ECUMEST Association, partner to the programme.

• Support to cultural press

In the framework of this initiative, two main projects have been developed in 2003.

- ❑ **Cultural magazines - platforms of dialogue in the countries of South East Europe.** International symposium organised in partnership with Goethe Institute Bucharest and with the support of the Stability Pact (11-12 December 2003). The symposium brought together representatives of cultural magazines from Romania, Germany and central and East-European countries, aiming to be a platform of encounters and communications for the cultural magazines in the region and a forum of discussion, from a regional perspective, of the decisive role they have to play in the democratic reconstruction of the countries of South East Europe and in view of the EU integration process. Parallely, the symposium has also addressed issues related to the necessary resources and the practical means of supporting cultural magazines, the ways of securing a flow of information in the region, the priority thematic issues and topics, etc. This meeting could also represent a first impulse in setting up a network of cultural magazines in South East Europe, which could facilitate the establishment of transnational contacts on intercultural basis.
- ❑ **Increase access to essential information on cultural issues for local opinion leaders throughout Romanian provinces - pilot project (March-December)** The project aimed to facilitate the access to cultural press of the provincial cultural and academic milieus. Implemented with the support of *Pro Helvetia and Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation*, the project consisted in granting 100 free

subscriptions to magazines *Dilema*, *Litere, arte, idei* and *Observator cultural*. The beneficiaries are especially young individuals representing the academic, cultural and educational milieus, especially from small cities, which have received the above-mentioned magazines from March to December 2003.

More details and the report of this project are available online at http://www.ecumest.ro/eng/e_presa_cult/e_subscriptions.htm.

• Promoting the mobility and networking

through the following activities:

□ Participation to the development of the Balkan Express network

Balkan Express - The Balkan performing arts network -, launched in the year 2002 at the initiative of performing arts operators from throughout Europe, aims to become an informal platform of performing arts professionals from Balkan countries, as well as beyond, which facilitates the exchange of information, ideas and projects, the dialogue and communication, and encourages collaboration in the Balkan region, helping as well in establishing connections with other regions. ECUMEST has taken over the role of contact point of the network for Romania. In 2003, ECUMEST has contributed in the preparation and has participated through Oana Radu in the encounter, which took place in Sarajevo, 7-9 November 2003.

□ Participation in the meeting of INCD – International Network for Cultural Diversity, Opatja, Croatia, October 2003.

□ Participation in the meeting of IETM network – Informal European Theatre Meeting, Birmingham.

□ Participation in the meeting of ENCATC – European Network Of Cultural Administration and Training Centres.

□ Partnership with the French Cultural Centre in Cluj in the organisation of the workshop “Culture” in the framework of the *Rencontres Europeennes de Cluj*, 16-18 October 2003.

• Commissioned consultancy and research activities

□ Providing the national contribution on cultural cooperation policies and practices in Romania in the framework of the study 'The State of Cultural Cooperation in Europe in Various Cultural and Artistic Fields'.

Undertaken in 2003 at the commissioning of the European Commission's Directorate-General for Education and Culture by the European Forum for Arts and Heritage (EFAH), Brussels and the Interarts Foundation, Barcelona, the study 'The State of Cultural Cooperation in Europe' was released in January 2004 and aimed to picture existing trends in the field of intergovernmental cultural cooperation in 31 European countries. The ECUMEST Association represented the national correspondent for Romania of this evaluation process, undertaken under the coordination of Corina Şuteu.

Project period: February - May 2003.

- ❑ **Mapping out existing opportunities and promoting sustainable cooperation in the cultural sector between Romania and the Netherlands.** A research project developed by the ECUMEST Association upon commission by the Royal Dutch Embassy in Bucharest.

The project aims to facilitate and improve the mutual knowledge and stimulate the structural and sustainable cooperation in the cultural sector between Romania and the Netherlands; to promote Dutch culture in Romania as well as the development of bilateral long-term partnership by identifying the sectors and areas (including key actors) of cultural activity in Romania where potential collaboration can be developed. The project is developed in the framework of the ARCult programme.

Project period: November 2003 - July 2004.

- ❑ **Consultancy services provided for the Design of a Public Education and Awareness Campaign in the framework of The Cultural Heritage Project, Romania**

The Cultural Heritage Project (CHP) was initiated by the Romanian Government in 1999 based on a World Bank Learning and Innovation Loan, to which additional funding from the Government of Romania and the World Monuments Fund was added (thus leading to a total budget of US\$6.9 million). The objective of the Cultural Heritage Project is to help Romania develop an improved national cultural heritage strategy. The Design of a Public Education and Awareness Campaign is part of the institutional capacity strengthening measures to be implemented under CHP, aimed at developing greater public understanding of, and support for, the importance of cultural heritage conservation. Hydea S.r.l. - engineering and architectural firm from Florence, which has been providing public and private clients with Cultural Heritage expertise since its foundation in 1990, was asked to submit a proposal for consultancy services for the design of a public education and awareness campaign. In view of securing a good knowledge of the local context, Hydea S.r.l. entered into a partnership with ECUMEST Association, which brings its knowledge of the specificities of the Romanian context and a complementary expertise to that provided by Hydea, given its track record in the areas of training and education and cultural policy development – which, though not exclusively – had an important cultural heritage component. Following the proposal made by Hydea & ECUMEST, a contract for the provision of consultancy services for the design of a Public Education and Awareness Campaign to be carried out in the framework of the Cultural Heritage Project was made with the Ministry of Culture and Religious Affairs – Project Implementation Unit of the CHP.

The consultancy services were provided in October - December 2003.

● **Funding**

In 2003, for the realisation of all the above-mentioned activities, the ECUMEST Association has enjoyed the financial support of a series of both public and private organisation, from both Romania and abroad: the European Cultural Foundation, the Central European Initiative, the Ministry of Culture and Religious Affairs of Romania, the Open Society Institute in Budapest, the Swiss Cultural Programme in Romania, the Royal Netherlands Embassy in Bucharest.

• Executive Board and Staff, 2003

Executive Board

Corina SUTEU, president
Aura CORBEANU, executive director
Oana RADU, programs director

Other staff

Stefania Ferchedau (since October 2003)
Dan GHITA, project coordinator (till September 2003)
Tsveta ANDREEVA, local coordinator of the *Policies for Culture* programme in Bulgaria and Macedonia (based in Sofia)
Ela AGOTIC, local coordinator of the *Policies for Culture* programme in Croatia (based in Zagreb)
Elena IACOB, accountant

temporary employees

Carmen Bota, project assistant (April-June 2003)
Bogdan Bugoiu, project assistant (Oct-Dec 2003)

On specific projects and activities the ECUMEST Association has also been working with a variety of *collaborators* throughout the region of South East Europe (collaboration in terms of information provision, expertise, organisation and logistics).

Members of the Association as of 31 December 2003

Dan BARTHA - LAZAR
Dragos BUHAGIAR
Eugen COJOCARIU
Claudia CONSTANTINESCU
Aura CORBEANU
Carmen CROITORU
Alexandru DABIJA
Nicoleta DASCALU
Mihai IANCU
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